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Note for researchers-

Re: Vietnam Task Force Report of 4/61-5/61: "A Program of Action to Prevent Communist Domination of South Vietnam"

The drafting history of this report is somewhat convoluted and sorting it out is complicated by the fact that various drafts exist in three separate folders in the National Security Files and five drafts or portions of drafts appear in Volume 11 of the House Committee on Armed Services's United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967. These drafts and their covering memoranda (some of which are still security classified) indicate the following history of the report:

1. 4/26/61 draft of 15 pages with a one page map - Entitled "Task Force Draft," this version was relayed by Roswell Gilpatric (Deputy Secretary of Defense) to President Kennedy on 4/26/61 for consideration by the National Security Council.

The covering memo is published on page 42 of the Committee Print. A sanitized version of the report is published on pages 43-57 of the Committee Print. (A copy of the Committee Print is available in the Library for consultation.)

2. 4/26/61 draft of 16 pages with a one page map and a 7 page annex entitled "Status of Counter Insurgency Plan for Vietnam" --Entitled "Task Force" rather than "Task Force Draft," this supplemented version, which differs slightly in the 16 page draft from item 1 above was relayed by Roswell Gilpatric to President Kennedy on 4/27/61 for consideration by the NSC. (Note that the Gilpatric memo is the same as the 4/26/61 version above with the date changed.)

There is a copy of this version and the covering memo in the National Security Files: Countries: Vietnam, 4/61. The covering memo has been declassified on the basis of the 4/26/61 Committee Print memo. The draft has been sanitized in accordance with all the versions of the report published in the Committee Print. The entire report has been submitted for mandatory review to determine if portions which exist only in this draft may be declassified.

3. 4/28/61 draft paper entitled "Effect of a Political Settlement in Laos on the Proposed Program of Action for Vietnam" of 5 pages- Marked "Second Draft, Col. E. F. Black, 28 April.

Published in Committee Print in sanitized form on page 58.

4. 4/28/61 draft paper entitled "Effect of a Political Settlement in Laos on the Proposed Program of Action for Vietnam" -- Called "Draft," relayed to McGeorge Bundy by Colonel Black on April 28 with note that it was still under consideration at the Pentagon. All of the changes in this version from the above version are included in the final 5/6/61 report's annexes.

This document has been declassified and with its covering note is in the National Security Files: Countries: Vietnam, 4/61.

5. 5/4/61 draft of 24 pages - This version is a revision of the 4/28/61 draft with input from the Departments of Defense and the Treasury, particularly on the military and economic sections. This version was relayed to the Task Force by General Edward G. Lansdale (Assistant to the Secretary of Defense) for Roswell Gilpatric on May 1, 1961.

The covering memo has been declassified after mandatory review and is in the National Security Files: Countries: Vietnam, 5/61. The report, also in that folder, has been sanitized in accordance with the 4/28/61 and 5/6/61 reports in the Committee Report and mandatory review.

6. 5/4/61 draft of 36 pages - This revision of the 4/28/61 draft is a Department of State product with new material added by State and ICA. (The additions and deletions are clearly marked as such.) It is considerably different from the Treasury/Defense revision above. It was relayed from State in an unsigned memo on 5/3/61 which has been declassified after mandatory review.

A sanitized version has been prepared after mandatory review and comparison with the 4/28/61 and 5/6/61 versions in the Committee Print. The declassified covering memo and the sanitized draft are in the National Security Files: Countries: Vietnam, 5/61.

7. 5/4/61 draft of 17 pages - Relayed by a 5/6/61 Roswell Gilpatric memo, this is called a "new draft". It contains much that was in the 5/1/61 Department of States draft, but does not yet have annexes.

The copy in the National Security Files: Countries: Vietnam, 5/61 has been sanitized in keeping with the versions in the Committee Print on pages 70-87 and 138-154.

8. 5/6/61 draft of 17 pages with 7 annexes of 44 pages - Same draft as item above. Still marked "draft". Relayed by 5/8/61 General Lansdale memo.

The Lansdale memo is published on page 69 of the Committee Print,--
sanitized versions of the draft report are published in the Committee
Print on pages 70-87 and 138-154, and a sanitized version of the-
annexes is published in the Committee Print on pages 89-130. ----

9. 5/11/61 NSAM 52 with 17 pages 5/6/61 draft and 7 annexes
of 44 pages - The "draft" report and annexes are the same as the ones
above.

The report is published in sanitized form in the Committee Print,
pages 138-154. Copies of the report and annexes, sanitized in accordance
with the Committee Print versions, are in the National Security Files:
National Security Council: NSAM 52.

Researchers should note that sanitization of the 4/28/61 draft and the
two 5/6/61 drafts, the annexes, and the Laos report in the Committee
Print is inconsistent. There are large differences in the Covert Actions
and Laos sections. The sanitized versions found in the National Security
Files have been sanitized in accordance with all four versions.

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